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ABSTRACT

Although there have been many educated minority and women groups available for positions in higher education, it was not until the pressure of the growing thrust of the civil rights movement in the 1960s did colleges and universities begin to move in the direction of integration. Barriers had to be removed, not just moved. It has been apparent to white administrators in higher education who are trying to comply with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as well as Title VI and Title IX, that merely enforcing a policy of nondiscrimination does not result in instant equal job opportunities for all persons. Old attitudes and methods need review and revision. Resistance exists among white administrators to current federally-sponsored affirmative action programs. White administrators and faculty must take the responsibility of examining or reviewing and revising their old attitudes and methods. (Author/LBH)

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Perspectives on White Administrators in Higher Education and Affirmative Action

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Executive leadership is characterized by administrative style, a particular pattern of managing institutional activities. Administrative style varies widely and it reflects the personalities, values and attitudes that make up the administrative group of the institution.

Regardless of the administrators' style in institutions of higher education, it is suggested that the following questions should be continuously dealt with from day to day - not just philosophically and with "lip service" but with honest commitment and continuous follow-through.

1. Am I ensuring that all groups in need of assistance receive on the job training when necessary?

2. Am I ensuring that personnel in the minority and women groups be hired in decision-making roles?

3. Am I ensuring that the minority and women groups receive equitable remuneration for the role they are hired to perform?

4. Am I ensuring that new employees from these groups as well as those already in the university family be provided opportunities for meaningful advancement?

In other words, are you moving in the direction of full and effective utilization of minority and women groups at your university? For purposes of this paper, minorities will be defined as Blacks, Spanish-Surnamed, American Indians and Orientals.

It is no secret that there have been and continue to be systematic attempts to exclude minority and women from participation in institutions of higher education, especially as teachers and administrators. Blacks, for example, have looked to education attainment as a possible source of career advancement and financial security. But, the integration era has often proven to be a deferred dream for many educated and capable blacks. This assertion is supported by a study done by Scruggs (1975) which indicated that:

> The American culture trait of racial prejudice has led to a history of systematic attempts to exclude blacks from participation in its institutions. These attitudes still hold fast after twenty years of desegregation - integration.[1]

Although there have been many educated minority and women groups available for positions in higher education, it was not until the pressure of the growing thrust of the civil rights movement in the 60's did colleges and universities begin to move in the direction of integration.

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[1]James Scruggs, "Desegregation - Integration: How has It Gone" (Research Study, Miami Florida, 1975).

Universities were proded into recruiting more minority administrators, teaching faculty and students.

Equal opportunity is more than putting a minority or woman in a white man's job. The barriers must be removed, not just moved. This statment can further be supported by an article written by Nason (1972) which indicated that:

> It is slowly becoming socially unacceptable today to hold racist attitudes and beliefs, yet such attitudes with strong historical strength are difficult to change in human nature. Thus it is unrealistic to expect that white managers' attitudes have changed sufficiently in recent years to end overt discrimination in the american corporation.
>
> Most likely, the social pressure for civil rights from all sources has modified the observable behavior of white managers. The result is that racism is exerted at a more subtle level and is more difficult to combat. For example, it is easier to combat racially based hiring as promotion policies if they are translated into formal policy by the organizations managers than if they are informally agreed upon and covered by rationalizations of job qualifications and seemingly objective screening tests.[2]

It must become apparent to white administrators in higher education who are trying to comply with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as well as Title VI and Title IX, that merely enforcing a policy of non-discrimination does not result in instant equal job opportunity for all persons. Old attitudes and methods need review and revision. The effects of generations of discrimination and under-utilization of

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[2]Robert W. Nason, "The Dilemma of Black Mobility in Management: Discrimination Still a Problem," Business Horizon, Vol. 15, No. 4 (August, 1972), 57 - 68.

minorities and women by universities and other institutions is still in evidence; therefore affirmative action must be implemented and continuously evaluated as it is a set of result oriented steps that the university commits itself to in order to provide equitable treatment for all employees, regardless of race, color, national origin, religion or sex.

According to Executive Order 11246 (1972):

> Affirmative action requires the employer to do more than ensure employment neutrality with regard to race, color, religion, sex and national origin. As the phrase emplies, affirmative action requires the employer to make additional efforts to recruit, employ and promote qualified members of groups formerly excluded, even if that exclusion cannot be traced to particular discriminatory actions on the part of the employer. The premise of the affirmative action concept of the Executive Order is that unless positive action is undertaken to overcome the effects of systematic institutional forms of exclusion and discrimination, a benign neutrality in employment practices will tend to perpetuate the status quo ante indefinitely... The requirements of determining underutilization, setting goals and timetables and taking related action were designed to further employment opportunity for women and minorities.[3]

There has been and continue to be growing resistence by white administrators to current federally sponsored affirmative action programs. White administrators and faculty must take the responsibility of examining or reviewing and revising their old attitudes and methods in an effort to

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[3]U.S. Department of HEW, Higher Education Guidelines Executive Order 11246 (Washington: Office for Civil Rights, 1972), p. 3.

eliminate obstacles within the structure and operation of the institution (e.g. discriminatory hiring or promotion standards) which have prevented minority and women groups from full and effective utilization.

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